

New Parks North

An annual progress report on natural and cultural heritage initiatives in Northern Canada.

March 2011

www.newparksnorth.org

Newsletter 20



Introduction

This annual newsletter provides brief status reports on projects concerning the establishment and development of parks and conservation initiatives in northern Canada. Aboriginal land claims remain a key factor in the establishment of parks and protected areas.

The *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (1993) provides a process for the establishment of national parks, territorial parks and conservation areas in Nunavut. Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreements must be concluded for all existing territorial parks and for management plans for all existing parks and conservation areas.

Approximately 18% of the lands in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region are conserved and managed in a co-operative manner under the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* (1984) or

by agreement with Inuvialuit. The *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* (1992) and the *Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* (1993) address natural areas, wildlife and heritage conservation issues.

Government and the Dehcho First Nations signed a Framework Agreement and an Interim Measures Agreement in 2001, marking significant steps in the Dehcho Process toward negotiating a final agreement. The Northwest Territory Métis Nation is currently working with government toward an agreement-in-principle. Land claim and treaty land entitlement considerations for all areas where claims are not settled will strongly influence the timing of conservation proposals in those areas.

Eleven of Yukon's 14 First Nations have Final Agreements and Self-Government Agreements in place. The Council of Yukon First Nations (www.cyfn.ca) is the central political organization for the First Nation people of the Yukon.

Further information on land claim agreements may be found at the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada site at wwwainc-inac.gc.ca/al/ldc/ccl/fagr/index_eng.asp.

New Parks North has been organized by claim area or settlement region. These areas are indicated on the front-page map.

Judi Cozzetto, Editor

Yukon, NWT and Nunavut Land Claim Settlement Regions

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* Overlap exists in claim areas

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Aboriginal Land Claims

Editor's Note: The following article was compiled from several government sources and is updated yearly. It is included here to provide a brief introduction to Aboriginal land claims for persons not familiar with them.

A Brief Overview

In Canada, the courts have recognized the common law concept of Aboriginal rights and title. The existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of Aboriginal people have also been recognized and affirmed under section 35 (1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

The evolution and development of the federal government's land claims policy has been closely linked to court decisions. The first claims policy statement in 1973 was initiated by a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada (the 1973 *Calder* decision), which acknowledged the existence of Aboriginal title in Canadian law. The Supreme Court's 1990 *Sparrow* decision clarified that these rights are subject to Constitutional protection, and the Court's decisions in *Delgamuukw* (1997) and *Bernard and Marshall* (2005) have articulated the nature of the property right arising from Aboriginal title. In recent years, cases such as *Haida* and *Mikisew Cree* have expanded on previous decisions vis-a-vis consultation. As well, the 2003 Powley Supreme Court of Canada decision provided a ten part test in the application of Métis rights.

In order to address uncertainties created by the Court's decisions, the federal government announced its intention in 1973 to negotiate claim settlements. As the policy developed, claims were divided into two types:

- comprehensive claims – based on the concept of continuing Aboriginal rights and title that have not been dealt with by treaty or other legal means; and
- specific claims – arising from alleged non-fulfillment of Indian treaties and other lawful obligations, or the improper administration of lands and

other assets under the *Indian Act* or formal agreements.

In recent years, a third category of claims has developed to deal with Aboriginal grievances that fall within the spirit of the comprehensive and specific claims policies, but do not meet strict acceptance criteria.

Comprehensive Claims

The primary purpose of comprehensive claims settlements is to conclude agreements with Aboriginal groups that will resolve the legal ambiguities associated with the common law concept of Aboriginal rights. The objective is to negotiate modern treaties that provide clear, certain, and long-lasting definition of rights to lands and resources.

Negotiated comprehensive claim settlements provide for certainty for governments and third parties in exchange for a clearly defined package of rights and benefits for the Aboriginal beneficiaries codified in constitutionally protected settlement agreements. Comprehensive claim agreements define a wide range of rights and benefits to be exercised and enjoyed by claimant groups. These may include full ownership of certain lands, guaranteed wildlife harvesting rights, participation in land and resource management throughout the settlement area, financial transfers, resource revenue sharing and economic development measures.

Where national parks are established in a settlement area through the claim process, the claimant group continues to exercise its traditional harvesting activities within this protected area. As well a management board may be established, with representation from the Aboriginal community and government, to advise the Minister on the management of the national park. Finally, the land claim agreement sets out what economic opportunities associated with the national park will be enjoyed by the claimant group.

Aboriginal rights in 40% of Canada (primarily Ontario and the Prairies) were addressed through the negotiation of historic (pre-1920s) treaties. Twenty-one modern treaties have been negotiated since 1975 addressing Aboriginal land rights to an additional 40% of the country (mainly in northern Quebec, Labrador and the Territories). Aboriginal claims have not yet been resolved in approximately 20% of Canada, including the Maritimes, most of British Columbia, portions of Quebec, Labrador and Ontario, and parts of the Territories.

Self-government negotiations may take place parallel to, or at the same table as, the comprehensive claims negotiations. The federal government is prepared to consider constitutional protection of certain aspects of self-government where the parties to the agreement concur. Self-government must be negotiated in keeping with the 1995 *Framework for the Implementation of the Inherent Right and the Negotiations of Self-Government* policy.

Specific Claims and Treaty Land Entitlement

Specific claims relate to the fulfillment of treaties and to the federal government's administration of Indian reserve lands, band funds and other assets. The government's primary objective with respect to specific claims is to discharge its lawful obligations to First Nations.

Other Claims

The federal government is reaching or negotiating settlement of a number of other Aboriginal grievances, which have sometimes been referred to as claims of a third kind. These grievances fall within the spirit of the comprehensive and specific claims policies, but do not meet strict acceptance criteria.

Dehcho

The Dehcho First Nations (DFN) (<http://www.dehcho.org/home.htm>) have requested the establishment of a Dehcho territory and their own process to deal with the Crown. The Dehcho Process addresses governance, lands and resources negotiations among federal and territorial governments and the DFN. Negotiations have resulted in a Framework Agreement and an Interim Measures Agreement.

The Framework Agreement sets out the scope, process, topics and parameters for negotiation of an agreement-in-principle and a final agreement. The Interim Measures Agreement provides for participation of the DFN in the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management regime; a regional land use planning process that will facilitate conservation and resource development; an interim management arrangement for Nahanni National Park Reserve of Canada; interim land withdrawals; and an interim resource development agreement.

In February 2010, under the auspices of the Main Table, Parks Canada and DFN established a working group to

draft a chapter on National Parks for the Dehcho Process.

Northwest Territory Métis Nation

In 2002, this group, formerly known as the South Slave Métis Tribal Council, changed its name to the Northwest Territory Métis Nation (<http://www.nwtmetisnation.ca/>). When the *Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* failed to be ratified by a majority of the Aboriginal people of the Mackenzie Valley in 1990, the federal government decided to enter into regional claims in the NWT where no claim had been settled. However, in the South Slave District, the Akaitcho Treaty 8 Dene opted to seek fulfillment of their treaty land entitlements rather than enter into a regional comprehensive land claim. This left some Métis in the area without a vehicle to press for their concerns.

The then Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada offered to enter into a non-rights based process with the Métis of the South Slave District to deal with their concerns. A Framework Agreement was signed in August 1996 that outlines a two-stage negotiation process: land and resources

and, after the signing of an agreement-in-principle, self-government. In 2006 the Main Table reached agreement on 62 key outstanding issues, clearing the way for the drafting and review process for chapters of the agreement-in-principle.

Akaitcho Treaty 8

In 2000, negotiations began between government and the approximately 2,000 Akaitcho Treaty 8 Dene (<http://www.akaitcho.info/>) who assert traditional use of lands primarily south and east of Great Slave Lake, and northeasterly as far as the Nunavut boundary. After a break in 2002, negotiations resumed in January 2003, with emphasis on lands and governance issues and are progressing. In November 2007, Canada announced a major interim land withdrawal to temporarily protect 62,000 km² of land while negotiations continue, plus another withdrawal of 26,118 km² to allow the parties to determine whether to establish a new national park reserve in the area of the East Arm of Great Slave Lake and east and north of there. (Also see article on page 18.)

Nunavut

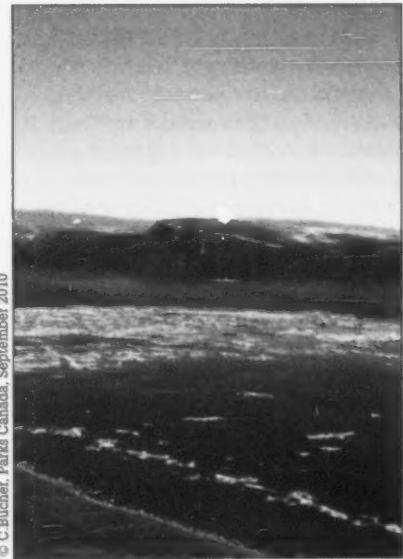
Government of Canada – Parks Canada Agency

Northern Bathurst Island National Park Proposal

In early 2009, Parks Canada (PCA) and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) reinitiated discussions for a potential national park on northern Bathurst Island. The area under consideration for a national park represents the geology, landforms, vegetation and wildlife of the Western High Arctic Natural Region and includes critical habitat of Peary caribou, listed as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. In October 2009, with the support of

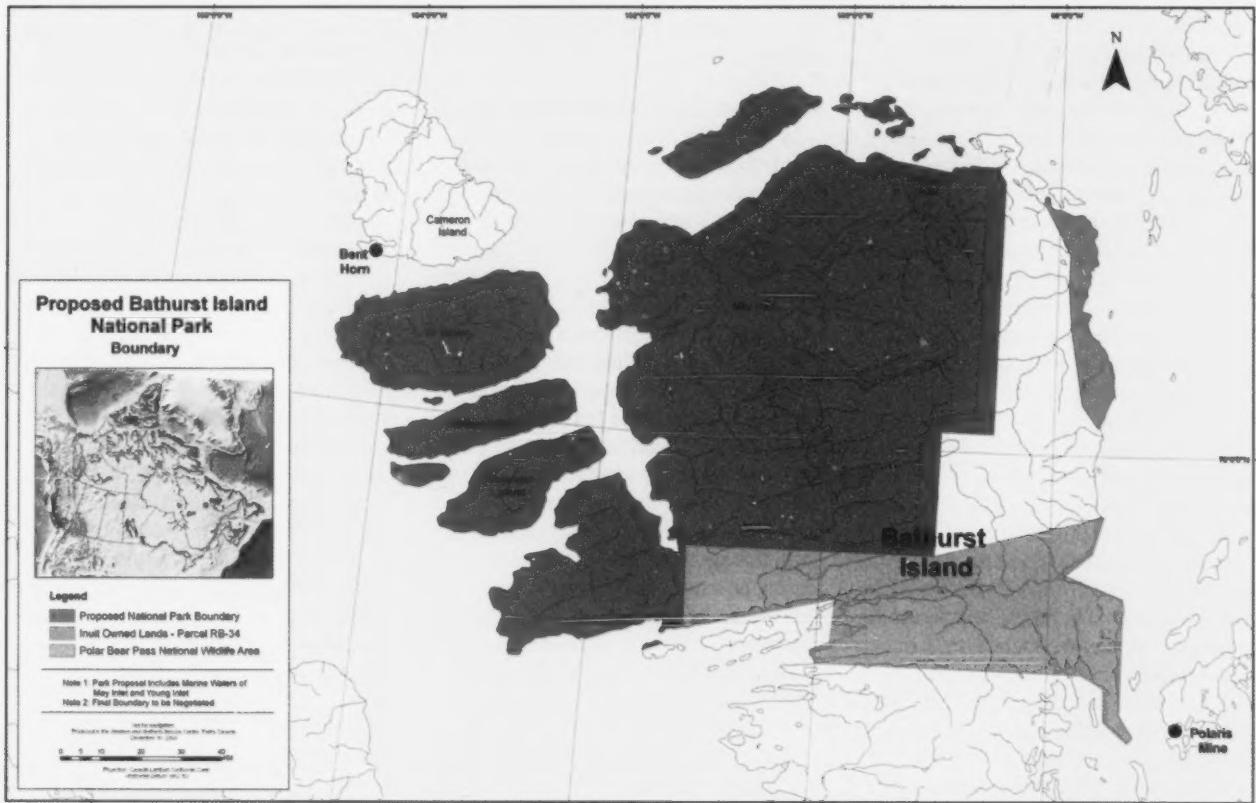
Resolute Bay Inuit organizations and the QIA, the federal government renewed the interim land withdrawal for the area for an additional five years. The land withdrawal will allow PCA and QIA the time to negotiate an Inuit Impact & Benefit Agreement (IIBA) and make a final park boundary determination.

Formal negotiation of an IIBA for the proposed park began in April 2010. The *Nunavut Land Claim Agreement* requires that PCA and the Designated Inuit Organization (QIA in this case) negotiate an IIBA prior to establishing a park in Nunavut. The IIBA addresses any matters connected to the proposed park that would have either a detrimental impact on Inuit or that could reasonably confer a benefit



© C.Bucher, Parks Canada, September 2010

Overflight of northern Bathurst Island.



on Inuit. Some of these matters include, among others: Inuit rights, co-operative management and economic benefits. IIBA negotiations are progressing well but a final park boundary remains to be agreed upon.

In September 2010, PCA held a community meeting in Resolute Bay to inform and update residents, the Resolute Bay Community Land & Resources Committee and the Hunters and Trappers Organization on the status of the proposed national park establishment process. Residents were given the opportunity to ask questions about the park proposal and to voice their concerns. The highlight of the meeting was a one day field trip to Bathurst Island on which, to the pleasure of participating community residents, many healthy Peary caribou were seen.

Future steps include a community information session in Grise Fiord, the negotiation and development of a park boundary, and the conclusion

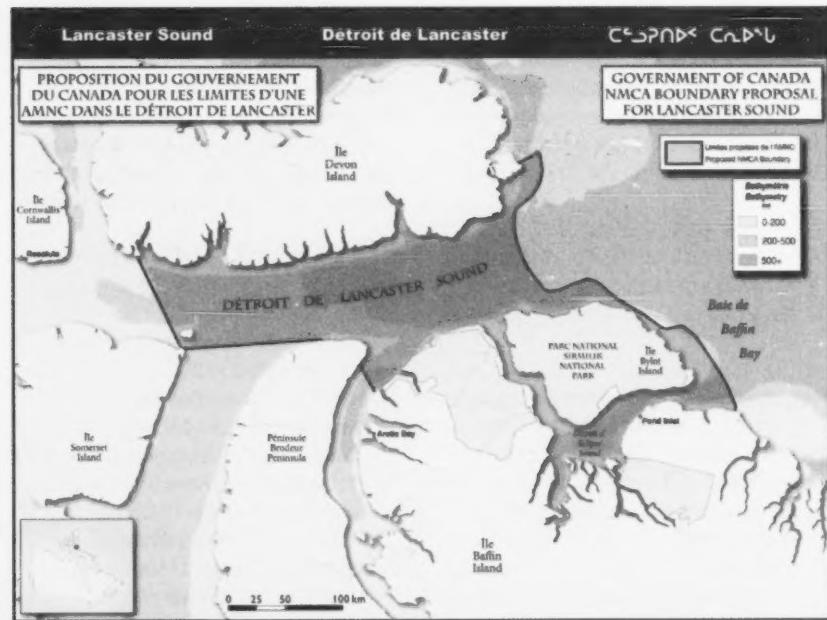
of the IIBA. Once agreement has been reached between PCA and QIA, consultations about this national park proposal and park boundary will take place. At that time PCA will be seeking the views and opinions of Nunavummiut, stakeholder groups and the Canadian public.

Lancaster Sound – Proposed National Marine Conservation Area

Lancaster Sound forms the eastern entrance to the Northwest Passage, the legendary corridor through Canada's Arctic Archipelago. It is an area of critical ecological importance to marine mammals, including seals, narwhal, beluga and bowhead whales, as well as walrus and polar bears. It is bordered by some of Canada's largest Arctic seabird breeding colonies, whose populations total in the hundreds of thousands. The global ecological significance of Lancaster Sound is further underscored by its setting as the migratory gateway to the

central Arctic for tens of thousands of marine mammals and by its importance as a refuge for many species that depend on the polynyas and shore leads that form in it each winter.

In December 2009, QIA and the governments of Canada and Nunavut announced the beginning of a feasibility assessment for the proposed establishment of a national marine conservation area (NMCA) in Lancaster Sound. One year later, on December 6, 2010, the federal Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of Health jointly announced the Government of Canada's position on a potential future boundary for the NMCA and underscored the government's commitment to protect the marine waters and wildlife of Lancaster Sound. The announced potential boundary encompasses the majority of Lancaster Sound, as well as Eclipse Sound and the waterways that



Canada

connect the two sounds, and it provides the basis for community consultations and other steps that must now follow as part of the feasibility assessment. While these consultations take place, no exploration or development of petroleum resources will occur within the proposed boundaries. Once approved as a designated NMCA, the region will remain protected from industrial development, regardless of any resource potential.

Following the completion of the feasibility assessment, an IIBA will have to be negotiated as a next step

toward formal establishment of the NMCA.

Quttinirpaaq National Park

Fort Conger National Historic Site

Fort Conger is a site of historic significance with remains of British and American exploration dating to the late 19th century, as well as 20th century Canadian, British and Danish expeditions. The site is under stress from both natural and cultural causes – contamination from arsenic, copper, lead and zinc left by these early expeditions, and eroding bank

endangering unique cultural resources. Climate change may also accelerate the process by affecting permafrost and causing structural changes to the buildings and ground surface.

Natural erosion will probably affect the site and its features over the next decades as the bank on which Fort Conger sits is actively eroding into the sea.

Monitoring of the site since 2002 has shown that there has been a loss and movement of some artefacts. Before further changes occur at Fort Conger, site recordings were conducted two ways during the 2010 field season.

Working with professors from the University of Calgary, laser scanning created a virtual (digital), three-dimensional model of Fort Conger and its resources. The laser scanner took overlapping photographs of archaeological features and buildings, creating a digital archive of the site with 5mm accuracy. The scans are of sufficient quality to be used in structural analysis of resources and can be used in a variety of other ways for education, websites and visitor experience. A virtual Fort Conger can also be used for public education, websites and visitor experience to excite public interest in archaeology and history.

Photographic and measurement monitoring protocols for the site were redesigned. The photographic monitoring will allow the detection of changes in the buildings and surface artefacts from year to year, while measurement monitoring will determine how quickly the bank is eroding.

Kettle Lake

On the east end of Tanquary Fiord, nestled between soaring mountains, plateaus and drumlins is a small kettle lake. The earliest Arctic nomads camped around its shores 4,000 years ago. Called Palaeo-Eskimos of the Independence I culture by archaeologists, these hunters lived in this polar desert when temperatures were slightly warmer than today, although winters were as cold and dark



Dr. Peter Dawson (University of Calgary) and Chris Tucker (Point Geomatics) beginning the laser scan at the Peary huts, Fort Conger NHS.

as at present. Danish archaeologist Count Eigil Knuth excavated 23 dwelling ruins around Kettle Lake in 1965 and recovered 84 small stone tools such as burins, arrow points, needles and microblades. These features and artifacts tell a story of how, 4 millennia ago, people survived in this marginal region for 300 years by living in small skin tents, hunting muskoxen and caribou, and burning willow, heather and perhaps muskox dung for fuel.



50X7A2-375, light grey chert projectile point with serrated edges.

In July 2007, several Independence I artifacts made of stone were located on the surface of two sites around Kettle Lake. The artifacts were not removed at that time. As they are unique and irreplaceable specimens from a distant past, PCA archaeologists were concerned that they might disappear due to trampling by muskoxen or soil movement. In consultation with the Joint Park Management Committee, it was decided to collect the artifacts and have them curated in perpetuity at the PCA Western and Northern Service Centre in Winnipeg. Fourteen artifacts including projectile points, burins and scrapers as well as several flakes were collected from these two sites. Concerns that muskoxen activity could disrupt the sites and lead to loss

of these artifacts was well founded as holes dug by a muskox were found at one site. Some of the artifacts are being replicated for use in school programs with the students of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord.

Government of Nunavut – Department of Environment – Nunavut Parks and Special Places Division

Program Development and Planning

The Department of Environment's (DoE), Nunavut Parks and Special Places (NP&SP) Division continues to make progress in redefining its core tools. Included in this is the advancement of a new NP&SP Program and development of new frameworks for Park Management Plans, Master Plans and Inventories of Park Resources. Revisions to the *Territorial Parks Act* and its Regulations to reflect the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, as well as review of the Territorial Parks System Plan, are also underway.

In keeping with the Umbrella Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIIBA) for Territorial Parks, the Government of Nunavut (GN), represented by DoE, remains committed to working with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and each of the three Regional Inuit Associations in the joint planning, management and establishment of impact and benefit measures related to protected areas in Nunavut. The parties continue to focus on implementing the IIIBA and to negotiate funding of the IIIBA's 17 Articles with the federal government.

Heritage Appreciation Strategy Framework

In keeping with the IIIBA for Territorial Parks, the GN is required to offer training and educational programs and communication events for the public as they relate to Nunavut's Territorial Parks and Special Places. NP&SP has undertaken the development of a Heritage Appreciation Strategy Framework to guide proponents in undertaking heritage appreciation in the territory. The

framework outlines timelines and tools for target audiences, and recommends procedures and methodologies to be followed.

The Heritage Appreciation Strategy Framework was completed in 2010 and implementation will commence in 2011.

Territorial Park Feasibility Studies and New Initiatives

Based on attraction development projects initiated in 2001, DoE's mandate under the *Territorial Parks Act* and existing Land Use and Community and Economic Development Plans, NP&SP continues to work with the communities of Clyde River and Kugaaruk to advance park feasibility studies in these areas. Furthermore, within the context of the development of the Nunavut Parks Program, NP&SP are also working with local communities to study three new locations in Nunavut, including Napartulik/Axel Heiberg Island, the Belcher Islands (Sanikiluaq) and the Back River. The focus is on protecting and preserving these areas' natural and cultural heritage, and enhancing opportunities for recreation, tourism and economic development.

NP&SP staff will also begin community consultations to garner interest in a territorial park or special place for Arviat in 2011.

Arviat

Arviat is the second most-southern community in Nunavut, located in the Kivalliq Region approximately 260 km north of Churchill, MB, and about 100 km away from the tree line. Arviat is located in close proximity to the McConnell Migratory Bird Sanctuary, the Arvia'juaq and Qikiqtaarjuk National Historic Sites and is surrounded by a number of rivers that wind through the open tundra.

Potential park development areas around Arviat have been identified at, but are not limited to, the McConnell River Falls for its scenery and wildlife – which would complement the Migratory Bird Sanctuary managed by Canadian Wildlife Service; Padlei

at Kinga Lake for archaeological, historical, and wildlife significance; Maguse River and Post north of Arviat for its historical significance; and Edehon Lake southwest of Arviat for archaeological, scenery, and wildlife importance.

Back River

The Back River, near the communities of Baker Lake and Gjoa Haven, is being studied for consideration as a Canadian Heritage River (CHR) nominee.

Baker Lake, the only inland Nunavut community, is in the Kivalliq Region. Gjoa Haven is also known as "Uqsuqtuq", meaning "it's oily", is in the Kitikmeot Region. The Back River is one of Nunavut's largest rivers, flowing east from just inside the NWT, then turning north about 300 km north of Baker Lake, where it heads for the sea. Some Inuit refer to the Back River as "Ukkukhikalik", meaning "place to find stone for making pots and oil lamps".

CHRs are quite different from territorial parks. The main difference is that there are no specific laws or regulations that come into effect when a river is designated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. No land changes hands either. What changes is how communities, landowners and outsiders see the river. It takes a special river, rich in natural and cultural heritage and recreational opportunities, to become a CHR. Besides being recognized for their unique heritage values, CHRs also have the benefit of going through management planning exercises centred on building consensus among communities, landowners and regulators about how best to manage the river to maintain and celebrate its heritage values.

NP&SP will know more about the heritage values of the Back River once the background study is complete. At that time, Inuit and government will come to a decision about whether or not to pursue the CHR nomination of the river.

Clyde River

Since 2001, NP&SP has been actively working with the community of Clyde River and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association to develop a territorial park in the region. A core Advisory Committee, comprised of key community representatives from the Clyde River Hunters and Trappers Organization, Hamlet Council, Community Lands and Resources Committee, Elders Council and Youth Council, led the process. The feasibility study process is complete and direction is currently being sought from the territorial Minister of Environment and Nunavut's Cabinet to move forward with the next planning phase.

Clyde River sits in the midst of a spectacular fiord landscape on the east coast of Baffin Island. Each fiord has its own unique sculpted rock walls with dramatic formations, like the monumental cliffs at the junction of Sam Ford Fiord and Walker Arm and the high vertical cliffs of the meandering China wall. The area around Clyde River includes open-ocean, deep inlets, icebergs, sheer mountain walls, glaciers, rivers, valleys and tundra. Wildlife includes polar bears, seals, narwhal, bowhead whales, caribou, hare, arctic fox, and numerous species of birds. The rolling hills of the Barnes Plateau, found at the end of the fiords, continue to be important caribou hunting grounds for Nunavummiut.

Kugaaruk

Based on 2009 community consultations and site visits that identified an area of interest in/around/outside of Kugaaruk, the Hamlet endorsed a final report and recommended park concept in 2010. Discussions will continue in 2011 with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA), DoE staff and the community on support for the community recommended areas for a park.

Following discussions with KIA, ministerial and cabinet direction will be sought on whether to proceed with the next phases of the planning and park establishment in the area.

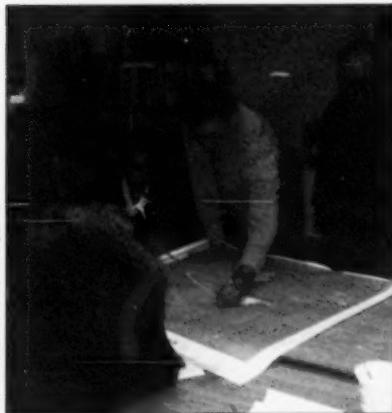
Napartulik / Axel Heiberg Island

Napartulik is on uninhabited Axel Heiberg Island, Canada's seventh-largest island and is the second-most northern island in Canada. It is located in the Qikiqtaaluk Region approximately 385 km north of Grise Fiord, Canada's northernmost community, about 1895 km from Iqaluit and an amazing 3860 km north of Ottawa. This makes Axel Heiberg closer to the capitals of Norway and Iceland than to the capital of Canada. It is also relatively close to Quttinirpaaq National Park.

The fossil forests of Napartulik are approximately 45 million years old, yet their remains – stumps, leaves, branches, trunks and cones – are still clearly visible on the surface of the



Ancient forest remnants mummified in time, Axel Heiberg Island.



Resource information collection with the Sanikiluaq Park Advisory Committee, Sanikiluaq NU.

high arctic soil. Even more intriguing is the fact that the abundant plant material is not, in fact, fossilized, but perfectly preserved in a mummified state. Napartulik is an extremely rare site. There are only two or three similar places known to exist in the world, but none that boast such an ancient or well-preserved collection of ancient plant life. In addition to mummified plants, Napartulik is also known for several major fossil animal discoveries, such as giant tortoises. It may also hold the key to understanding one of the most ancient and devastating global extinction events in Earth's history.

Nunavut Parks is currently collecting information to support a feasibility determination for a territorial park at Napartulik to help preserve its astounding and globally significant fossils and its sensitive populations of muskox and Peary Caribou. A key component of a potential territorial park at Napartulik will be the protection of these natural features, as well as providing opportunities for broad education programs to help people learn about and appreciate this unique place in Nunavut.

Sanikiluaq (Belcher Islands)

Nunavut Parks is currently working directly with the community to collect information and explore options for a territorial park or special place development in the area.

The community of Sanikiluaq and the surrounding islands, located 150 km from mainland Quebec in the south eastern part of Hudson Bay, represents a unique marine/coastal landscape that is not currently represented in the Nunavut Parks Program. Consisting of over 1500 islands with a total land area of over 1300 km², this distinct location offers one of the most southerly extensions for many high arctic species, making it an important area for further study and future protection. Breeding populations of waterfowl, including ptarmigan and eider duck, and seasonal species, such as harbour seal, beluga and white whale, are prominent among the islands.

Outstanding scenic features of waterfalls, distinct geological formations, sandy beaches, twisting inlets and bays make the islands a prime location for water-based recreation and attraction-based tourism development. The islands also feature an abundance of historic and cultural resources. Over 67 documented archaeological sites dating back to the Dorset have been identified, and park or special place establishment could allow for the preservation of these cultural resources while offering opportunities for interpretation and heritage appreciation by residents and visitors alike.

NP&SP staff visited the community to gauge interest in exploring the feasibility of a park or special place for the area in 2010. Letters of support were sent to DoE by the Sanikiluaq Hamlet Council, the local Hunters and Trappers Association and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. The first steps of the feasibility phase commenced in late 2010 and are ongoing in 2011.

Existing Territorial Parks

Coral Harbour - Fossil Creek Trail/Alijivik

Together with the community of Coral Harbour, NP&SP identified the historic site of Alijivik as the preferred location for a territorial park in 2004/05. Alijivik is located on Inuit Owned Lands

(IOL) which are managed by the Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA) and, as such, will require agreements between DoE and the KIA, and the Hamlet and the KIA, for the development of a territorial park. Until these agreements are in place, DoE will not be able to advance the Alijivik proposal.

In the interim, NP&SP has worked with the community to develop an interpretive trail program at Fossil Creek, which is renowned for its high concentration of exposed fossils. Installation of new signs was completed in 2010.

Gjoa Haven - Northwest Passage Trail

The Northwest Passage Territorial Trail has been developed to showcase the search for the Northwest Passage and increase the tourism potential of Gjoa Haven. The trail is a self-guided interpretive trail with stops at points of historical interest throughout the community, telling the story of the many failed expeditions and the one successful attempt of Roald Amundsen through the Northwest Passage.

In 2009, the Amundsen Centenary Cairn was officially completed and new amenities, including flag poles and benches, were installed in 2010.

Iqalugaarjuup Nunanga Territorial Park

Just inland from the west coast of Hudson Bay, about eight kilometres northwest of the community of Rankin Inlet, sits Iqalugaarjuup Nunanga ("the land around the river of little fishes") Territorial Park. The most outstanding feature is the historic site Qamaviniqtalik ("place of ancient sod houses") and its interpretive walking trail located on the flood plains of the Meliadine River. Numerous archaeological features at Qamaviniqtalik are representative of the transition from the Thule culture to the historic Caribou Inuit culture.

Park development has been ongoing since the summer of 2003. In 2010, NP&SP continued to develop and define hiking and interpretive trails, and delineated roadways to reduce impacts



Enjoying Parks Day in Iqalugaarjuup Nunanga Territorial Park.

to the archaeological site and other park features, including maintenance of the sod hut that was constructed by Rankin Inlet Elders. To celebrate these initiatives and the park, NP&SP staff also hosted a community event on Parks Day in 2010 with great success. Work on the preliminary plan for a new pavilion facility will continue in 2011.

Katannilik Territorial Park

Katannilik ("the place of waterfalls"), in south Baffin near Kimmirut, is an area of approximately 1,270 km², almost all within the Soper River watershed – a Canadian Heritage River. The park provides opportunities for water-based recreation including rafting, canoeing and kayaking, as well as hiking, cross-country skiing, dog sledding and snowmobiling. The community organizes cultural events for visitors to the park and the increasing number

of cruise ships visiting Kimmirut. Summer visitor use alone has resulted in increasing economic impacts in Kimmirut for arts and crafts, home-stay programs, and community events. The Soper House, the home of the 1930s explorer and biologist Dewey Soper, now serves as the Soper House Gallery where soapstone carvings, jewellery made from local stone, and handicrafts are for sale through the Quliruakut Society.

Katannilik Park staff host annual summer science camps in the park for local students. Here they learn about wildlife and plant ecology, traditional use of rocks and minerals, navigation using rocks/stars, and safe boating skills on a river. In addition to the fencing installed at the Soper campground, new bear deterrent fencing was installed at the Livingstone River site in 2010. A new guide map

for the summer visitor season was completed and work is ongoing to finalize a new comfort station.

Kekerten Territorial Park

Kekerten Territorial Park, located 50 km from Pangnirtung within Cumberland Sound, was a highly used Scottish Whaling Station during the 1850s and 1860s. A number of artefacts remain, including the 1857 foundations of three storehouses, large cast-iron pots and restored tent frames and rings.

NP&SP and the community of Pangnirtung have been working on the recreation of the Scottish Whaling Station at Kekerten, increasing the interpretive potential of the site to include the relationship of Inuit with the whalers. In 2009, NP&SP continued enhancing the whaling messaging through maintenance and upgrades to the Hudson Bay Company "Blubber Station", which houses interpretive messages and two reconstructed whale boats from the era. The station and interpretive program supports local outfitters who provide tours to the park, the increased cruise ship visitations, and student programs held in the territorial park. Restoration work was completed in 2010 and work is ongoing for new interpretive sign fabrication and installation.

Kugluk Territorial Park/ Coppermine River

Kugluk (Bloody Falls) Territorial Park is located 15 km southwest of the community of Kugluktuk, around Bloody Falls on the lower Coppermine River. The Falls are the focal point of the park where the rock and cliffs force the river into a boiling, rushing torrent. Where the river widens above and below the falls, the rugged tundra climbs up from the river to the surrounding hills and plateaus. Winter ice break-up and flooding of the land around the Falls results in lush tundra vegetation, including an impressive show of wildflowers in the summer months.

The park contains remnants of Thule winter houses used more than 500 years ago, archaeological evidence of caribou hunting camps of more than



Students learning about the archaeology and history of Kugluk Territorial Park, during park resource inventory review process.

1,500 years ago, pre-Dorset use of the site more than 3,500 years ago, and a rich history of Arctic exploration. Bloody Falls was declared a national historic site in 1978 because of its 4,000-year history of occupation, which includes perhaps the most famous battle in the north.

With its close proximity to Kugluktuk, local use of the area for camping and fishing continues to increase, reflecting the traditional use of the site. The park is a convenient place to camp for canoeing and rafting parties descending the Coppermine River, and a portage trail provides an easy traverse around the rapids.

Updates to the existing park resource inventory, through archaeological site work and other means, were completed in 2010. NP&SP staff will work to update the master and management plans, as well as apply the operation/infrastructure recommendations in the 2010 resource inventory report into 2011.

Mallikjuaq Territorial Park

Mallikjuaq ("big wave") is an appropriate name for an island where rounded rock hills and low tundra valleys resemble giant rolling waves. Mallikjuaq Territorial Park, a 45 minute walk from Cape Dorset,

showcases archaeological sites and stone structures dating back over three millennia.

The design and fabrication of five new interpretive panels for the park, scheduled maintenance and facility upgrades to the visitor centre in the community will continue into 2011.

Ovayok Territorial Park

Ovayok is the name used to describe the large esker that dominates the landscape within this territorial park located 15 km east of the community of Cambridge Bay. According to local legend, the three esker mountains were once a family of giants who died of starvation while walking across Victoria Island in search of food. Visitors can explore the legend and the rich cultural history associated with Ovayok as they hike through the park, whether they choose a day trip or to camp for several days. The area is renowned for its diversity and numbers of Arctic birds, and many bird watchers from around the world are attracted by opportunities to add to their life lists.

Parking, trail and day-use facilities, and a new camping area have been designed. NP&SP completed the interpretive plan for the park and installed trail markers and interpretive signs in 2010. Projects for 2011 include

the installation of new tent platforms and comfort stations in keeping with the community's recommendations.

Sylvia Grinnell and Qaummaarvit Territorial Parks

Located one kilometre from the heart of Iqaluit, Sylvia Grinnell Territorial Park provides an opportunity for many visitors and residents to easily access an Arctic landscape. The park provides visitors with a chance to see a variety of Arctic plants, mammals and birds. Cultural heritage in the park area includes traditional fishing sites at the Sylvia Grinnell River rapids, stone cairns and Thule ruins. A recent recreation study in Iqaluit found demand and use of the park has made Sylvia Grinnell Park Iqaluit's number one recreation site.

NP&SP continues to work with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Department of National Defense toward the design and construction of a bridge across the Sylvia Grinnell River, linking Sylvia Grinnell and Qaummaarvit Territorial Parks and providing Iqaluit visitors with an accessible wilderness experience. The bridge has also been supported by the Rotary Club of Iqaluit and the Trans Canada Trail Foundation.

Initiatives Spanning Two or More Land Claims

Government of Canada – Parks Canada Agency

Parks Canada in Schools

Recognizing our "Ambassadors in Education"

The Parks Canada Ambassador for Education Award recognizes an educators' significant contribution toward increasing student awareness and appreciation for Canada's natural and cultural heritage. Three teachers in northern Canada were recipients of the award in 2010.

Mr. Brian Manning, principal of the Nakasuk Elementary School in Iqaluit, NU, received his award for his commitment to Parks Canada's (PCA) educational programs, especially as these reflect the PCA presence in Nunavut. Mr. Manning was able to find room in the school programs to accommodate PCA's educational initiatives, resulting in a heightened interest and awareness by all students. He continues to support PCA's outreach education program.

Mrs. Margaret Gordon of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School in Inuvik, NWT, received her award for her significant contribution toward

increasing student awareness of national parks through her leadership and support of the Environmental Stewardship Certificate Program for over the past five years. Mrs. Gordon's work has been characterized as playing a vital role in introducing her students to Canada's internationally recognized national parks system.

Ms. Sheena Adamson, also of Inuvik, NWT, was recognized for her energetic and enthusiastic role in connecting her high school students to Ivavik National Park – this often providing the first national park experience for most of these young people. Ms. Adamson was nominated for her work on the



Ambassador in Education Award presentation to Sheena Adamson by I. Thomas, Superintendent, Western Arctic Field Unit.

PCA Biology 20 Youth Camps in Ivavik National Park over the past three years.

The Biology 20 Youth Camp is a week-long high school science camp delivered jointly by staff of PCA and the Samuel Hearne Secondary School in Inuvik. Youth camps are an integral part of the education and community programs offered by PCA in the Western Arctic, and are offered yearly to the students of Inuvik, Aklavik, Paulatuk and Sachs Harbour. PCA also funds the Saoyu-?ehdacho National Historic Site Teaching and Healing Camp which is held annually in Deline, NWT.

The Parks Canada in Schools "Ambassador in Education Award" is one way to thank and appreciate

PCA's partners in education for a job well done. The program aims to reach every student at least once during his or her school years. Curriculum-based, teacher-tested resources are available at national parks, national historic sites and online at PCA's Teacher Resource Centre (www.pc.gc.ca/education). It is through the commitment of inspiring teachers and educators that PCA is able to deliver memorable learning experiences for future decision makers.

Aboriginal Leadership Development Program

Leadership for Life! Step into it! Learn, Grow, Excel!

PCA continues to invest in emerging Aboriginal leaders by supporting employees in the Aboriginal Leadership Development Program (ALDP). It is a four year, national program, developed in collaboration with Yukon College. Holistic in its approach, the ALDP enables transformational change. The program is open to indeterminate Aboriginal employees from any level or function within PC. Qualified participants are interested in a career with PC, are committed to continuous learning and have already demonstrated leadership potential.

The richness of ALDP reflects the diversity of its participants who come from all across Canada. The program is highly interactive and provides a

central experiential component, giving participants ample opportunity to practice their leadership skills, and to share their wealth of knowledge, experience and culture. Each spring, all participants convene in the Yukon for the core of their training, providing a rare opportunity for participants to be out on the land, to connect with the ancient rhythms of a timeless and majestic landscape and its people.

Upon completion of the program participants will be equipped to lead and excel, and to confidently embark on a leadership journey that contributes to the fulfillment of PCA's vision.

Are you interested in joining the ALDP network? Forward inquiries to Nicola Pritchett, Co-ordinator, ALDP 867-667-3973.

The strength of the ALDP flows from the participants and their voices, speaking most powerfully to the transformational experience that is its hallmark. This year we are honoured to introduce "My Awakening" by ALDP graduate Stacey Taylor, Anishnaabe descendant from the Mississaugas of the New Credit Reserve in Ontario. As an Anishnaabe "emookdaang daasat" (Anishnaabe archaeologist, one who uncovers by digging, to seek/learn), Stacey has made significant contributions through her extensive field work in Ontario.



ALDP graduation class.

My Awakening!

ALDP literally changed my life! It allowed me to develop skills and gave me the confidence to not only think outside the box, but to kick the box apart, recreate myself and redirect my career path.

My fellow ALDP classmates came from all over Canada, from Labrador to NWT to British Columbia. This is one of the many amazing things about the program – it brings together so many varied Aboriginal people. We all brought our unique life and work experiences together to create a cohesive group of friends and colleagues. We laughed, cried and learned together. We drew strength and love from each other, making us stronger as individuals and invincible as a group. We

became more knowledgeable and more confident, each with a new vision of who and what we can be, as Aboriginal people, as community members, and as employees. This is the real strength of the Aboriginal Leadership Development Program.

After Year 1, I was so excited about the possibilities my newly acquired experiences and skills could bring to my job. I immediately began to showcase these new communication skills by talking with my boss about career options for me. I started giving presentations to the general public and my professional colleagues – something I was terrified to do before! I also became more interactive with the public and the Elders. These new experiences increased my abilities and confidence. During my third

year with the ALDP, I received a promotion and my dream job placement!

But fate intervened and shortly after my new job placement I was in a life-threatening car accident. During the 2 months I lay in the hospital, I felt my fellow ALDP classmates' spirits there with me. Their strength and positive energy sustained me when I felt my lowest. And the inner strength and spirituality I achieved through the teachings of the ALDP and its Elders, gave me the courage to fight to recover. My injuries prevent me from returning to my dream job but I feel confident that my ALDP skills and experiences will allow me to change my life again and continue on with Parks Canada.

Government of the NWT – Industry, Tourism and Investment - Tourism and Parks

The 2010 parks and campground season was a good one for the Northwest Territories. Preliminary results show that camping permits increased two percent. Another positive sign is that 90 percent of the respondents to a NWT Parks Survey said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience and that they would recommend visiting NWT parks.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) recognizes the importance of its system of 34 territorial parks and campgrounds and is committed to enhancing the visitor experience and enjoyment at these parks and campgrounds. These survey results are a strong indication that the investments being made by the GNWT in our territorial parks and campgrounds are having a positive impact.

And work on this front continues. A number of projects are being undertaken to enhance visitor services.

60° Parallel Visitor Centre

This popular stopping point for travellers is located on the NWT/ Alberta border. While a new 60° Parallel Visitor Centre opened in the summer of 2010, interior design and displays will be completed in time for the 2011 summer season. The interior will feature modern displays promoting tourism in all NWT regions. It will also include interactive computer kiosks with touch screens where travellers can learn more about tourism offerings and products throughout the territory, and an online campground booking feature.

Trail Systems

In 2011 a number of territorial parks will feature upgraded trail systems to improve visitor access to natural features in the parks. Some of the projects include investment in the Twin Falls Park trail system in the South Slave, Jak Park in the town of Inuvik, and a viewing platform and trail system at Sambaa Deh Park in the Dehcho.

Facilities

Visitors to parks in the North Slave will benefit from a wide range of facility improvements in 2011. At Fred Henne Park in Yellowknife, the RV sanitation

station will be expanded and more sites will have electrical access. The beach area at Fred Henne will also be fitted with a new change room and washrooms. Both Prelude Lake and Reid Lake Parks, which are located on the NWT's Ingraham Trail, will offer visitors new shower buildings. Visitors to North Arm Park near the community of Behchokǫ will have use of a new kitchen shelter.

There are projects completed or underway to enhance park and campground facilities in other NWT regions. Visitors to Fort Providence Park in the South Slave will have access to a new kitchen shelter and Little Buffalo Falls Park will welcome visitors with a new day use shelter.

Site Expansion and Road Improvements

Larger groups will now be accommodated in a new group camping area in Fort Providence Park. There will be road improvements at Queen Elizabeth Park, located in the town of Fort Smith in the South Slave, that will make vehicle access easier and more pleasant. In a continuing effort to attract the growing RV market, 10 new sites will be available at Twin

Falls Park in the South Slave, featuring a larger footprint with pull-through capability for larger RV's. Little Buffalo Falls Park will also open the 2011 season with upgraded roads.

With these projects, and other smaller enhancements, the GNWT has invested almost \$2 million in parks infrastructure projects in 2010/11. Investments in 2011/12 will continue with improvements being made to the beach area at Fred Henne Park and a boat dock slipway at Gwich'in Territorial Park. Further hiking trail improvements will also be underway in the Inuvik region, improvements to the trail system at Blackstone Park in the Dehcho are planned, and powered sites will be made available at Twin Falls Park in the South Slave.

NWT Protected Areas Strategy

Overview

The NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) is a community-guided planning process to protect culturally and ecologically important areas in the NWT. It recognizes the need to balance conservation and economic development, while respecting Aboriginal rights and third party interests.

Developed by regional Aboriginal organizations, the federal and territorial governments, environmental non-government organizations and industry, the PAS was signed by the federal and territorial governments in 1999. Representatives from these organizations oversee the planning process through their participation on the NWT PAS Steering Committee.

The goals of the PAS are to protect special natural and cultural areas and core representative areas in each NWT ecoregion. An ecoregion is a relatively large area defined by similar climate, vegetation, geology and other ecological patterns. Establishing core representative areas will help conserve diverse landforms, vegetation and habitats in the NWT.

While development may be permitted in some protected areas as long as conservation values are not damaged, resource-based development would not be permitted in core representative areas.

Establishment Action Plan

The *Establishment Action Plan 2010-2015: Fulfilling the Promise of the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy* (<http://www.nwtpas.ca/documents/document-2010-EAP.pdf>) was developed by the PAS partners to enhance implementation of the PAS in a co-ordinated and co-operative way. Building on the accomplishments and partnerships fostered under the initial Action Plan (2004-2009), the Establishment Action Plan applies to the entire NWT and focuses on the actions necessary to secure the protection of proposed protected areas.

2010 Protection Highlights

In March 2010, the GNWT announced sponsorship of the first territorial site through the PAS. Buffalo Lake, River and Trails was proposed by K'at'odeeche First Nation and is being sponsored as a Candidate Critical Wildlife Area.

In June 2010, Kwets'oot'aá (North Arm), was proposed by the Tlicho Government as a Candidate National Wildlife Area (NWA) to be sponsored by Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS).

Lue Tué Syláí (Five Fish Lakes), proposed by Jean Marie River First Nation, was sponsored by the GNWT as a Candidate Cultural Conservation Area in November.

Candidate Protected Areas

Once an agency agrees to use its legislation to sponsor the advancement of an area through the PAS process, the "area of interest" becomes a "candidate protected area." The PAS now has eight candidate protected areas: six sponsored by CWS and two sponsored by the GNWT.

Environment Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service

Environment Canada (EC) establishes and manages NWAs to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat for the purposes of conservation, research and/or interpretation/education. The Wildlife Area Regulations under the *Canada Wildlife Act* allow the federal Minister of the Environment to recommend that the Governor-in-Council establish NWAs. In 2008, EC committed to establishing six such areas in the NWT by 2013. As of December 2010, six candidate NWAs are being sponsored through the PAS process.

Edéhzhie (Horn Plateau)

Edéhzhie was the first candidate NWA in the NWT. It includes the Horn Plateau, Mills Lake and Willowlake River and provides important habitat for boreal woodland caribou, wood bison, migratory waterfowl and waterbirds. The Edéhzhie Working Group submitted its Recommendation Report to the Dehcho First Nations (DFN) and Tlicho Government in November 2009. Key recommendations include a reduction of the boundary to 14,250 km² (57% of the original 25,230 km² candidate area) and the establishment of a co-management agreement based on the partner communities' and CWS's shared vision for the Edéhzhie NWA. In July 2010, the Grand Chiefs of the DFN and Tlicho Government submitted the Recommendations Report to the federal Minister of Environment as part of their formal request to establish the Edéhzhie NWA. In November 2010, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) granted a two year extension to the surface portion of the interim land withdrawal to allow time for the final establishment of Edéhzhie as a NWA.

Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (Ramparts)

Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta includes the Ramparts River drainage and extensive low-lying wetlands near the community of Fort Good Hope. It includes high quality habitat for boreal woodland caribou, Dall's sheep

Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Yukon

1. Agay Mene (proposed TP)
2. Alsek
3. Asi Keyi
4. Bonnet Plume
5. Canyon City
6. Coal River Springs TP
7. Devil's Elbow/Big Island (proposed HPA)
8. Ddhaw Gho Habitat Protection Area
9. Fort Selkirk
10. Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy & Fort Constantine
11. Herschel Island-Qikiqtaulik TP
12. Horseshoe Slough Habitat Protection Area
13. Ivavik NP
14. Kluane NP
15. Kluane NWR
16. Kusawa Lake
17. Lansing Post
18. Lewes Marsh Habitat Protection Area
19. L'hutsaw Wetlands Habitat Protection Area
20. Mabel McIntyre House
21. Ni'iinlii' Njik - (Fishing Branch) TP
22. Old Crow Flats (Van Tat K'atr'anahtii)
23. Original Telegraph Office, Yukon Sawmill Co. Office (Dawson)
24. Pickhandle Lakes Habitat Protection Area
25. Rampart House
26. Ridge Road Heritage Trail
27. Shawshe
28. Summit Lake/Bell River

NWT (see also NWT PAS map on Page 16)

38. Anderson River Delta MBS
39. Arctic Red River
40. Aulavik NP
41. Banks Island No. 1 MBS
42. Banks Island No. 2 MBS
43. Canol Trail/Dodo Canyon
44. Cape Parry MBS
45. Deejie Fishery & Fort Franklin NHS
46. Ehdaa NHS
47. Fort Smith Mission
48. Kendall Island MBS
49. Kitigaryuit NHS
50. Tagish Narrows Habitat Protection Area
51. Ta'th Mun Special Management Area
52. Tatshenshini
53. Thirty Mile (Yukon River)
54. Tombstone TP
55. Tsáwnjik Chu (Nordenskiöld) Habitat Protection Area
56. Vuntut NP
57. Whitefish Wetlands (proposed HPA)
58. Wood Buffalo NP

Nunavut

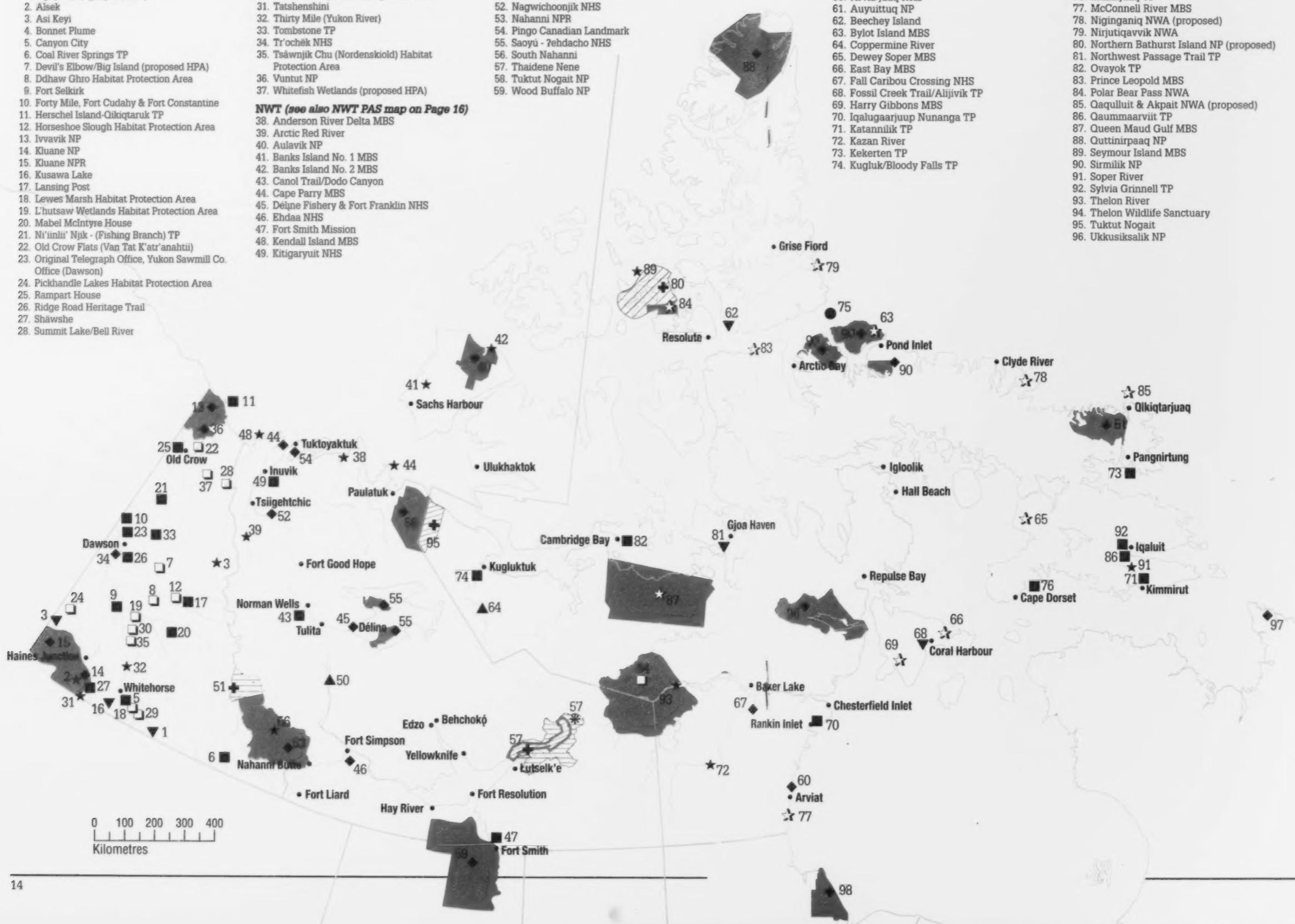
50. Mackenzie River (or portions thereof)
51. Naats'inch'oh
52. Nagwichoonaqjik NHS
53. Nahanni NWR
54. Pingo Canadian Landmark
55. Saoyu - ?ehdacho NHS
56. South Nahanni
57. Thaidene Nene
58. Tuktut Nogait NP
59. Wood Buffalo NP
60. Arvia'juaq NHS
61. Auyuittuq NP
62. Beechey Island
63. Bylot Island MBS
64. Coppermine River
65. Dewey Soper MBS
66. East Bay MBS
67. Fall Caribou Crossing NHS
68. Fossil Creek Trail/Alijivik TP
69. Harry Gibbons MBS
70. Iqalugaarjuup Nunanga TP
71. Katannilik TP
72. Kazan River
73. Kekerten TP
74. Kugluk/Bloody Falls TP

Other

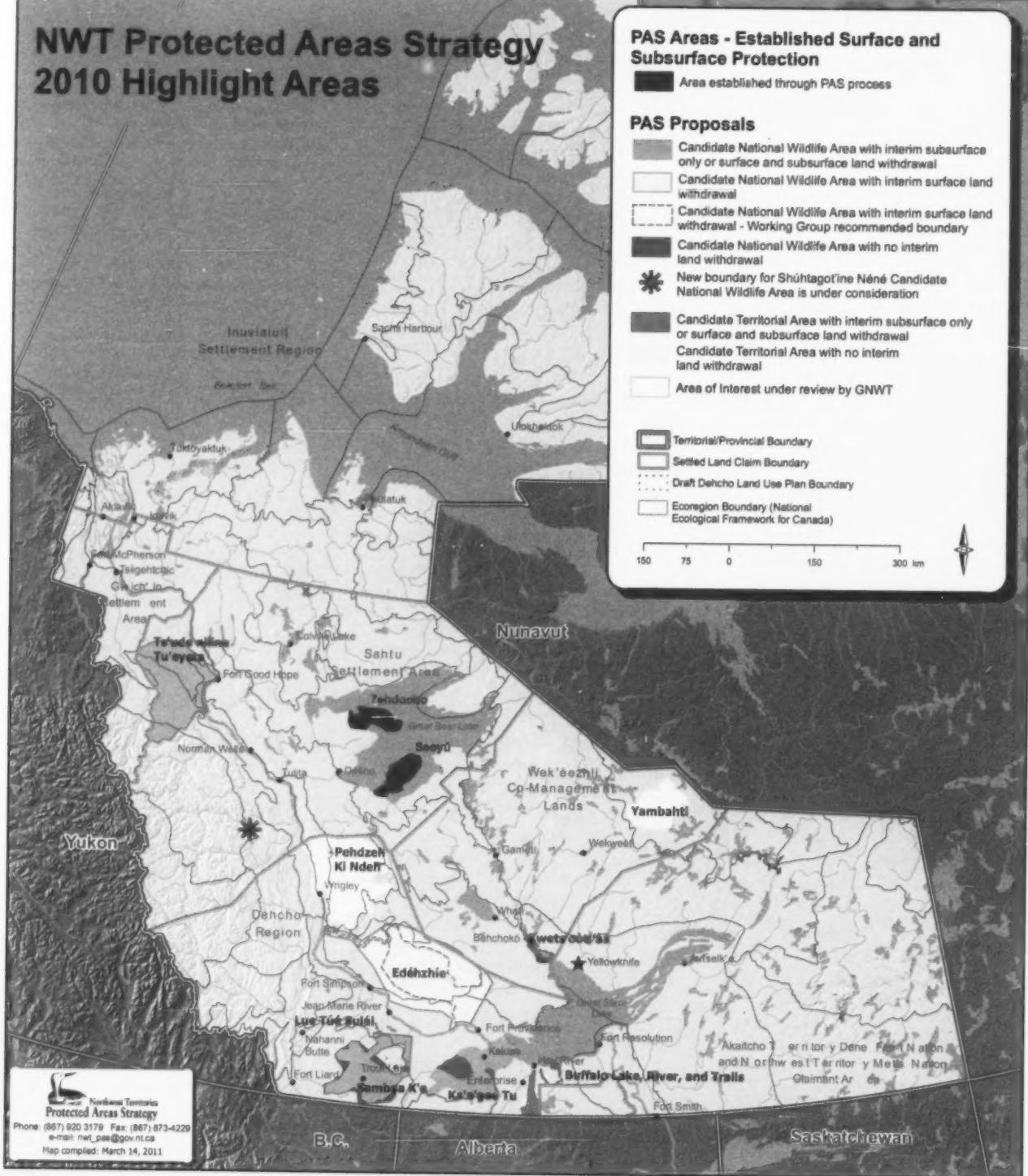
75. Lancaster Sound NMCA (proposed)
76. Mallikjuaq TP
77. McConnell River MBS
78. Niginganiq NWA (proposed)
79. Nirjutiqavvik NWA
80. Northern Bathurst Island NP (proposed)
81. Northwest Passage Trail TP
82. Ovayok TP
83. Prince Leopold MBS
84. Polar Bear Pass NWA
85. Qaalluit & Akpati NWA (proposed)
86. Qaummaavittu TP
87. Queen Maud Gulf MBS
88. Quttinirpaaq NP
89. Seymour Island MBS
90. Sirmilik NP
91. Soper River
92. Sylvia Grinnell TP
93. Thelon River
94. Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary
95. Tuktut Nogait
96. Ukkusiksak NP
97. Torngat Mountains NP, NL
98. Wapusk NP, MB

Legend

- Existing Parks, Park Reserves and Sanctuaries
- Proposed Parks
- Study Area
- Territorial Parks (TP), Park Reserves and Historic Sites
- ◆ National Parks (NP), Park Reserves (NPR), Landmark, National Historic Sites (NHS)
- ★ Migratory Bird Sanctuaries (MBS) and National Wildlife Areas (NWA)
- * Areas Under Study
- + National Park and National Historic Site Proposals
- ★ Heritage Rivers
- ▼ Territorial Park and Historic Site Proposals
- ▲ Proposed Heritage Rivers
- Other Conservation Areas
- National Marine Conservation Areas (NMCA) Proposals



NWT Protected Areas Strategy 2010 Highlight Areas



and grizzly bear. It also supports significant populations of waterfowl and waterbirds. This area is important to the subsistence economy of the community of Fort Good Hope. The fieldwork for the mineral assessment (part of the non-renewable resource assessment) has been completed. The Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Working Group will consider these results along with the cultural, ecological, renewable and socio-economic assessments in its determination of a proposed boundary and management objectives for the Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta NWA. The Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Working Group will produce a recommendations report which will be submitted to the Yamoga Land Corporation for approval and furtherance to the federal Minister of Environment as part of the proposal to establish the Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta NWA. An interim land withdrawal is in effect until October 2011. EC has applied for a two year extension of the surface and subsurface withdrawal.

Sambaa K'e (Trout Lake)

Sambaa K'e candidate NWA includes much of the Trout Lake watershed, which supports and maintains the traditional lifestyle and culture of the Sambaa K'e people. It contains significant numbers of boreal woodland caribou. The non-renewable resource assessment report will be available for consideration by the Sambaa K'e Working Group in 2011. The Working Group will also consider other assessment results in its determination of a proposed boundary and management objectives for the Sambaa K'e NWA. Their recommendations report will be submitted to the DFN for approval and furtherance to the federal Minister of Environment as part of a proposal to establish the Sambaa K'e NWA. Most of this area has interim protection until October 2011 via an interim withdrawal under the DFN Interim Measures Agreement.

Ka'a'gee Tu (Kakisa)

Ka'a'gee Tu is situated in the south-eastern corner of the Dehcho region and includes a large portion of the Kakisa River watershed and Beaver Lake near the community of Kakisa. It is the traditional territory of the Ka'a'gee Tu First Nation (KTFN), along with the K'atł'odeeche and Deh Gah Got'ie First Nations. Moose, beaver, fish and large numbers of waterfowl are found throughout the area. A number of federally listed species at risk, such as boreal woodland caribou, rusty blackbirds and some rare plant species are also found within Ka'a'gee Tu. In 2010, a threatened species, Canada warblers, was discovered in the southern part of the candidate area, almost 200 km north from its nearest known population.

In August 2009 EC accepted KTFN's proposal for sponsorship of Ka'a'gee Tu as a NWA. A Working Group has been set up to oversee the evaluation of the candidate area. Mineral assessment fieldwork was completed in 2009 and ecological fieldwork was completed in 2010. About 80% of the candidate area is covered by an interim withdrawal under the DFN Interim Measures Agreement until October 2011.

Shühtagot'iné Néné

In late 2010, the community of Tulita and the Shühtagot'iné Néné Working Group requested that the original study area be revised. A draft boundary was approved by community Elders and the Tulita District Land Corporation in late February 2011. The new study area boundary will be considered by EC's CWS before moving forward in the PAS process (the new boundary was not available at the time of publication). Assessments completed to date (ecological, cultural, renewable and non-renewable resources) will be applied to the new study area. No additional field work will take place in 2011.

Kwets'ootl'åà (North Arm)

Kwets'ootl'åà is the final candidate NWA going through the PAS. It is situated just south of the community of Behchokò and encompasses

approximately 570 km² of the northern portion of the North Arm of Great Slave Lake. The area has been used traditionally by local Dene for centuries for hunting, fishing and trapping.

In June 2010, EC agreed to sponsor this area due to its high cultural and ecological values. Kwets'ootl'åà is classified as an "important bird area" in Canada and is a key migratory bird site in the NWT with large numbers of tundra swans, Canada geese and other waterfowl using it as a staging area. A Working Group was recently established. Assessments are underway to document the cultural, ecological and economic values.

Government of the Northwest Territories

Two Territorial laws can be used to establish protected areas. Under the *Territorial Parks Act* a variety of protected areas can be established including Cultural Conservation Areas and Wilderness Conservation Areas. Critical Wildlife Areas can be established using the *NWT Wildlife Act*. As outlined in the Establishment Action Plan, the GNWT plans to assess up to six areas for territorial establishment in the next five years.

Buffalo Lake, River and Trails

The GNWT has sponsored this area as a candidate Critical Wildlife Area. Buffalo Lake, River and Trails include the western portion of Ejie Tué (Buffalo Lake) and Ejie Tué Dehé (Buffalo River) and lies within the south-eastern corner of the Dehcho Region. A traditional hunting, trapping and berry harvesting area, Buffalo Lake, River and Trails has been important to the K'atł'odeeche First Nation for untold generations and provides critical habitat for moose, waterfowl and fish spawning. The mineral and hydrocarbon resource assessments are complete and ecological and renewable resource assessments are underway. Most of this area has interim protection until October 2011 through the interim land withdrawal under the DFN Interim Measures Agreement.

Lue Túé Sulái (the Five Fish Lakes)

This area is being sponsored as a Cultural Conservation Area. It includes Ekali Lake (Ezáa Lue Túé), Sanguez Lake (Tl'one Túé), Gargan Lake (Tljetqii), McGill Lake (Tthets'éhk'e'), and Deep Lake (Dechí Ná?á). Encompassing an area of approximately 180 km², these lakes have been used for traditional activities such as hunting, fishing and gathering for countless generations. Jean Marie River First Nation has proposed Lue Túé Sulái as a protected area to ensure future generations will remain connected to their culture and history. A Working Group is being set up to oversee studies of the area's economic, cultural and ecological values. Most of this area has interim protection until October 2011 through the Dehcho First Nations interim land withdrawal.

Areas of Interest

Areas of interest have significant natural and/or cultural values and have support for formal protection from communities and/or regional organizations. The GNWT is currently reviewing two sponsorship applications. The Pehdzeh Ki First Nation applied in January 2009

for sponsorship of the Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh area of interest as a Cultural Conservation Area (under the *Territorial Parks Act*). The Tlicho Government applied in April 2010 for sponsorship of the Yamahti Area of Interest as a Critical Wildlife Area (under the *Wildlife Act*). Communities have identified approximately nine additional areas of interest but have not yet reached the step of requesting a sponsoring agency.

Conservation Science Highlights

The PAS continues to work on adapting standard conservation science to fit the unique conditions of the NWT to help make good land stewardship decisions.

To ensure the diversity of freshwater ecosystems is also represented in the network of protected areas in the NWT, a coarse-level freshwater classification was created. It is now out for peer review by freshwater specialists around Canada. Work to incorporate this information into the terrestrial coarse filter representation analysis approach is ongoing.

As part of the fine-filter analysis work, a terrestrial special features

report has been drafted. It will be subject to a peer review. This report details how the PAS plans to use the special features information collected to date and suggests regulatory conditions for those features located outside of protected areas. The special features in this report include: locations of rare and may be at risk plant sightings; amphibian and reptile sightings; hot and warm springs; eskers; mineral licks; and glacial refugia and karst (including alvars). Work continues to identify ecologically significant aquatic special features. Features currently being investigated include: beaches and beach ridges; deltas; disappearing streams; estuaries; rapids; springs; major tributaries; and waterfalls.

The PAS is also helping to develop a biome shift analysis with the Scenarios for Analysis and Planning group based in Fairbanks, Alaska. The project will use modeled temperature and precipitation data based on the five best performing global climate models for the arctic and tundra biome movement under likely climate change scenarios. The study area encompasses Alaska, Yukon, NWT and western Nunavut.

South Slave

Government of Canada – Parks Canada Agency

Thaidene Nene

In April of 2010 the Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency (PCA) and the Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation signed a Framework Agreement to begin negotiating a park establishment agreement for Thaidene Nene. Negotiations, currently underway, are expected to take two years.

PCA and the Northwest Territory Métis Nation have concluded a similar Framework Agreement to negotiate an Impact and Benefit Agreement for

Thaidene Nene. A Ministerial signing is anticipated in 2011 with negotiations beginning soon thereafter.

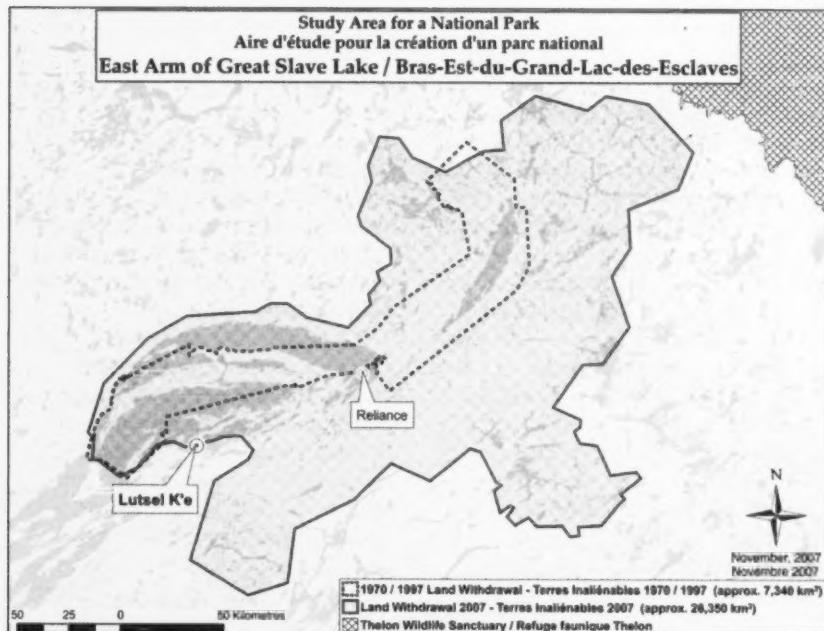
PCA will also consult other Aboriginal groups who may have interests in the area. Aboriginal groups have a significant influence on whether a national park reserve is established and, if so, under what conditions and what configuration.

The current study area is approximately 33,690 km² and consists of two land withdrawals. The 1970 land withdrawal (7,340 km²) has no expiration date and a five-year interim land withdrawal was put into place in 2007 (26,350 km²).

The Mineral and Energy Resource Assessment, and the Landscape Values study (see following article), will be released in 2011. With the completion of these two studies, the parties can begin to look at boundary options and seek input from business interests, private landholders and the public. Information sessions, a website and bulletins will be made available in 2011.

Our Landscape Values

The expansion of the Canadian national park system requires that park planning guide each new park proposal. Ecological, social and economic studies are required as part of the park



feasibility process and as support for the regulatory process. Prior to the establishment of a proposed national park/park reserve, PCA is required to identify the costs and benefits associated with the regulatory change. A standard approach, that integrates ecological knowledge and social and economic information, is required to support the planning and regulation of national parks.

The East Arm of Great Slave Lake lies entirely within the limits of the Canadian Shield and includes portions of the Churchill, Slave and Bear geological provinces. As a whole, the region is described as a rolling, rugged, rocky upland with a dominance of bedrock outcrops and vast numbers of lakes flowing from one to another by short, rapid-strewn rivers. The

vegetation is best described as a northern transition forest.

The region is rich in wildlife, including vast herds of migrating caribou. Moose, wolves, fox, beaver, bear, muskrat, wolverine, martin, mink and otter can also be found here. Lake trout, whitefish and northern pike thrive in the cold lakes and rivers. Traditional knowledge and archaeological evidence suggest that the region has been occupied by Northern Athapaskan people for thousands of years.

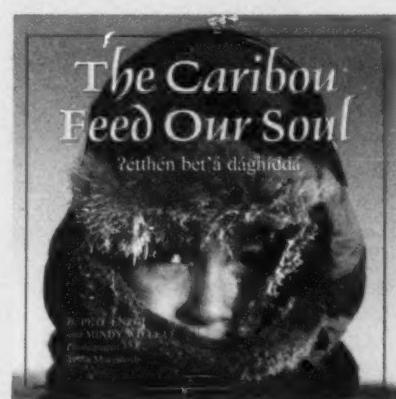
To represent the natural region and provide a cost-benefit approach based on ecological, cultural, non-renewable and renewable resource assessments, a Mineral and Energy Resource Assessment and socio-economic assessment are being carried out. In addition to an impact analysis of the park operational scenario, the socio-economic assessment will employ an ecological goods and services approach and use the total economic value framework to understand and assess the flow of protected area benefits. Information regarding ecological goods and services will help inform decisions regarding the boundary configuration of the proposed park reserve.

The Caribou Feed Our Soul

Pete Enzoe is Denésolíné (Chipewyan Dene) from Lutsel K'e, NWT, on the East Arm of Great Slave Lake. He is a hunter, fisher, and trapper. He sees his role in life as protector of the caribou and spends much of his time "reading" the land as he travels his peoples' traditional areas. Pete also helps scientists monitor the caribou herd's health and its migration. Pete has co-authored, with Mindy Willett, the sixth book in *The Land is Our Storybook* series. Each book in the series is told from the perspective of someone from each official Aboriginal language group in the NWT, revealing a richly textured picture of life in the North – on the trapline, around the campfire, in communities, at school and

within the outdoor school that is the land itself. The series celebrates the seasons, ages, genders, traditional activities and communities of the contemporary NWT. The stories are illustrated by the striking images of acclaimed northern photographer, Tessa Macintosh.

In *The Caribou Feed Our Soul* Pete takes readers on a respectful caribou harvest. Along the way, he shares creation stories about how his people are descendants of the caribou. He also describes the spiritual areas his community is trying to protect, including Thaidene Nene, which means "land of our ancestors." Pete's stories help the reader to understand the rich history of the Chipewyan Dene and their relationship with the land and the caribou today.



Sahtu

Government of Canada – Parks Canada Agency

Nááts'ihch'oh

PCA's interest in protecting the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem led to an initiative to establish a new national park reserve protecting the upper watershed of the South Nahanni River in the Sahtu Settlement Area. On the advice of Tulita District Elders, this proposed park reserve would be called Nááts'ihch'oh, so named for a unique mountain overlooking The Moose Ponds at the top of the South Nahanni River. The English name for this feature is Mount Wilson. An interim land withdrawal of 7,600 km², in place until March 2012 pursuant to the *Territorial Lands Act*, prevents recording of new third party interests while decisions are being made about the proposed park reserve.

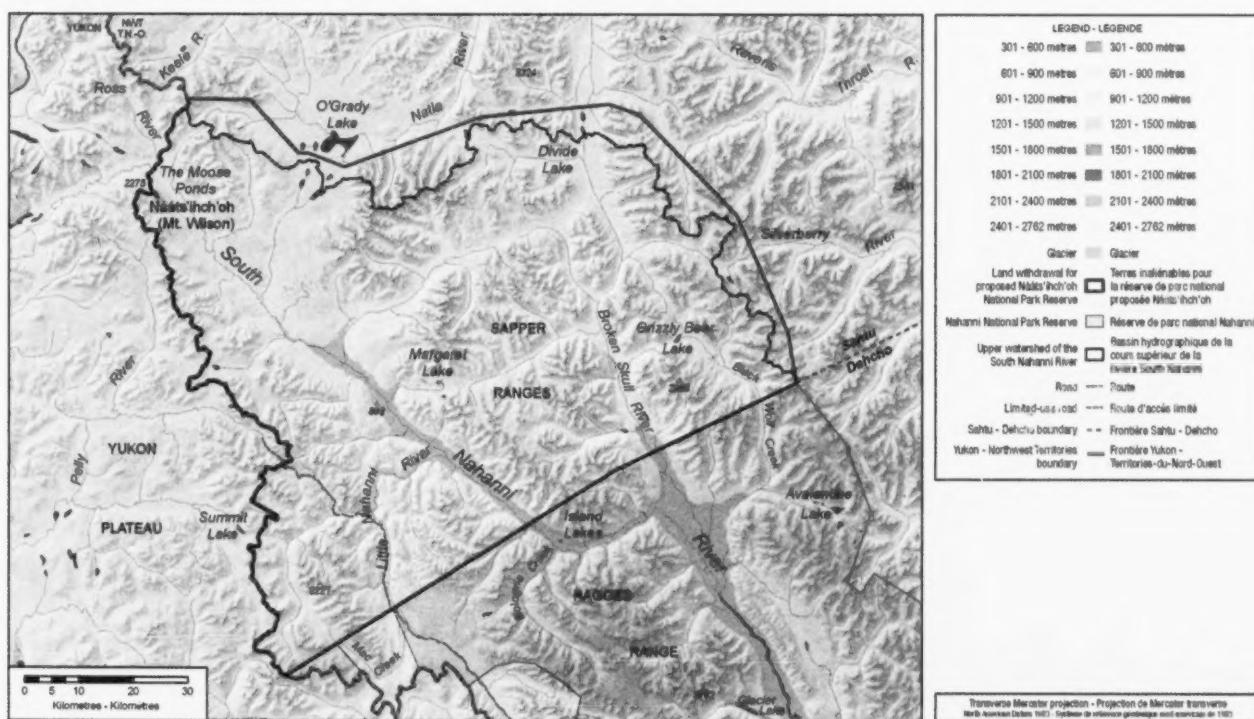
Negotiations between PCA and the Tulita District Nááts'ihch'oh Working Group – comprised of representatives

from the Tulita, Norman Wells and Fort Norman Métis Land Corporations, and the Tulita and Norman Wells Renewable Resources Councils – concluded with an Impact and Benefit Plan (IBP), which was ratified by the Tulita groups in April 2010.

Research, including wildlife studies and a Mineral and Energy Resource Assessment (MERA) published as Open File 5344 in November 2007, has provided a scientific basis for establishing a boundary for the park reserve. A traditional knowledge study was conducted on the Nááts'ihch'oh area in 2009. An archaeological team, including Elders and student representatives from Norman Wells and Tulita, surveyed three locations within the proposed area in July 2010 (see following article). PCA and Tulita District representatives conducted local, regional and national consultations on boundary options in late 2009 / early 2010, and the final consultation report was distributed in September 2010. Of the over 1600

respondents to the consultation process, 96% supported the initiative to establish the park reserve while 70% specifically wished to see the entire South Nahanni watershed protected. The full report and appendices are available at www.parkscanada.gc.ca/naatsihchoh.

Based on all the available information and the consultation results, the Senior MERA Committee continues to consider a boundary recommendation. With the conclusion of the MERA process and a boundary recommendation, the parties can expect to sign the IBP sometime in 2011. Once signed, the "effective date" is triggered and implementation of the IBP will initiate steps toward a new, operational national park reserve, protecting the precious headwaters of the South Nahanni River. Only an act of Parliament will establish the national park reserve.



2010 Archaeological Survey

From July 6 to 23, 2010, a field crew conducted an archaeological survey in the proposed Nááts'ihch'oh national park reserve located at the headwaters of the South Nahanni River in the Sahtu Dene and Métis traditional territory in the NWT. Forty-eight archaeological sites, camps, cut stumps, spruce tree shelters, snare traps, hearths, blazed and limbed trees, were recorded at the following locations.

The Moose Ponds

Using canoes to survey the circumference of the ponds, hiking

along a tributary flowing into South Nahanni River and hiking inland, 17 sites were recorded – three camps including one older camp used to dry or process meat, axe and saw cut stumps, spruce tree shelters, two snare traps, and a possible vegetation study or soil sampling area.

Divide Lake

Hiking and canoeing surveys around Divide Lake recorded 18 sites – the majority identified as axe and saw cut stumps, spruce tree shelters, blazed and limbed trees, and a hearth.

Grizzly Bear Lake

Foot surveys around Grizzly Bear Lake revealed 13 sites, including two camps. One camp consisted of cut tent poles, cache remains, cast iron stove parts, glass and metal fragments, and fuel barrels. The second camp was associated with a large collapsed pole structure described as a lean-to.

Further research and analysis is required to understand the human use and occupation of the areas surrounding The Moose Ponds, Divide Lake, and Grizzly Bear Lake.

© L. Dueck Parks Canada, 8 July 2010



Joe Horassi, Reanna Campbell and Maurice Mendo canoeing with Nááts'ihch'oh in background.

Yukon

Government of Yukon – Tourism and Heritage – Cultural Services Branch

A.J. Goddard Shipwreck Historic Site

In June 2008, researchers conducting a survey of wrecks along the Yukon River discovered the location of the remains of the A. J. Goddard sternwheeler on the bottom of Lake Laberge.

The wreck of the A.J. Goddard provides North America's only example of an historic "pocket steamer", significant for its unique design and relatively diminutive size. Several versions of these small steamers were brought into the Yukon during the Klondike Gold Rush. Early sternwheelers were central to the development of Yukon's transportation and mining industries, and the settlement of the territory. The Goddard sank in a storm in October 1901. Only

two of its five man crew survived. The exact location of its wreckage remained a mystery for over 100 years.

In June 2010 an international archaeological team, led by graduate student from the Texas A&M University's Nautical Archaeology Program, returned to the shipwreck to continue the survey, investigations and documentation begun in 2009. One dive team, deploying 3D sonar technology, was able to obtain details



© Government of Yukon, 2010

OceanGate/BlueView team and divers deploying sonar scanning head.

of construction previously hidden in restricted hold and hull spaces.

Work focused on hull construction and steam machinery, as well as the recording and labelling of 100 artefacts, most of which still remain on and around the wreck. Many provided a glimpse of the working life on the small sternwheeler. Twenty-eight artefacts were recovered from the wreck site and brought back to Whitehorse where they will undergo conservation treatment and become part of an exhibit at the Yukon Transportation Museum. The selected artefacts tell different stories about life on a Yukon River sternwheeler – a whistle, safety valve, pipe assembly and gauge reflect the vessel's steam-driven engine and communication system; shoes and a pocket magnifier that were, undoubtedly, personal belongings of the Goddard's crew; and an early gramophone player with three recorded discs was an unexpected find. Conservation treatment has revealed the music that accompanied the vessel on its Yukon River voyages.

Most objects were left in situ, preserved by the lake's cold water, where researchers and recreational divers can view them.

Divers can apply for a permit to visit the wreck. Underwater signage will remind visitors to leave this valuable piece of Yukon history intact for everyone to enjoy and artefact tags and locational data will allow government officials to monitor their condition.

The A. J. Goddard shipwreck has been designated Yukon's first underwater historic site, protected by Territorial heritage legislation. <http://www.opentheoceans.com/goddard/overview.htm>

Discovery of Gold Rush Burials in Dawson City

On November 4, 2010, crews excavating for new Dawson City Wastewater Facility encountered two burials approximately 2.5 metres below the ground surface. Work halted immediately and the following day a Senior Projects Archaeologist arrived to oversee the recovery of the burials and monitor further excavation. A third burial was encountered when the excavation was resumed, which was removed intact from the site. Further excavation turned up a fourth grave in the subsequent week.

The site of the excavation covered a part of the grounds of Fort Herchmer, a former North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) post. Archival and historical sources have been largely silent on the exact location of the "Barracks Cemetery", the burial site for murderers brought to justice by the NWMP and executed during Dawson City's Gold Rush historical period. Archival records list some 12 men hanged and then buried in the cemetery between 1899 and 1930, and historical accounts mention the use of the slough at the edge of the compound as a place of burial. Historical maps and air photos will allow for the slough to be mapped onto contemporary orthographic images, guiding any future development in this part of Dawson City.

Studies are underway to identify the four individuals. Preliminary examination of the remains by osteologist Susan Mooney, Heritage Officer for the Carcross/Tagish First Nation (C/TFN), confirmed that two were young First Nation males while the third was an older male of European ancestry. Drawing from the historic record, there was only one event where three people were executed and buried on the same day, August 4, 1899. In that instance the executed individuals consisted of two young Aboriginal men from the Tagish area of southern Yukon, known as the "Nantuck brothers", and a third man, Edward Henderson. The fourth individual is not identified at present.

The Tr'ondëk Hwéch'in Heritage Office is currently working with the C/TFN, Kwanlin Dun First Nation and relatives of the "Nantuck brothers" to determine the next steps for reinterment of their remains. The City of Dawson is deliberating over the location for reinterment of the other two bodies.

Invaluable assistance throughout the project was provided by the Tr'ondëk Hwéch'in Heritage Office, the City of Dawson, local historian Walker Graham, Yukon Highways and Public Works, the RCMP and Corix Water Systems.



© Fort Selkirk - Ribbon cutting for the new Elders' Cabin. Project manager, Don Trudeau (L), Elder, Johnnie Simon (centre foreground).

Fort Selkirk Historic Site

Fort Selkirk is viewed by many as the crown jewel of Yukon heritage. The site has been used by people for thousands of years and its over 40 standing structures, dating from as far back as 1892, represent a meeting place and home for two cultures. The restoration and interpretation program at Fort Selkirk was initiated 23 years ago, and the Selkirk First Nation (SFN) /Government of Yukon (YTG) partnership realized numerous accomplishments at the site in 2010.

A significant upgrade of the power system for the work camp included a new solar energy system, resulting in a large reduction of diesel fuel consumption. The new Elders' Cabin was made ready for occupancy with the installation of site-constructed furniture and provision of a wood stove. New, CSA approved stoves were also installed in all work camp buildings, including eight crew cabins and a newly-constructed office/accommodation building for the Project Manager.

Site restoration was carried out on the foundation and hewn log walls of the "Club Room" addition to the Taylor & Drury Store, and several sod roofs were replaced using a substrate membrane of EPDM synthetic rubber in order to increase their life span while retaining original appearance. Restoration work was carried out under the guidance of a carpentry instructor who provided training to novice staff.

On August 6, 2010, Fort Selkirk became the seventh site in the Yukon to be designated a Territorial Historic Site under the *Historic Resources Act*. SFN and YTG are planning a celebration of this event in July 2011.

Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine Historic Site

This site, established in 1886, is famous for being Yukon's first gold mining community, having the first NWMP post and mission school, and being the location where the first Klondike Gold Rush claims were registered. There is evidence of human activity at the site 2,000 years prior to the gold prospector's arrival.

This important historic site, usually referred to as, simply, Forty Mile, was the scene of much activity in 2010.

A one-time infusion of federal economic incentive, infrastructure funding from the Community Adjustment Fund, administered by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), enabled the acceleration of implementation of the site's building structural stabilization and restoration plan. Stabilization of the Roadhouse was completed, seeing the Roadhouse lifted off its site, a new foundation prepared, and then moved back. New flooring and a new roof were installed. Materials for a new floor system for the A.C. Co. Store & Machine Shop, the largest building on site, were

purchased and brought to the site for further work in 2011.

Major upgrades to the 3.35 km site access road, joining the site to the Clinton Creek mining road and leading to the Top of the World Highway, involved cutting and filling stretches of the road, easing curves and grades, rebuilding several culverts, extensive ditching, and raising and enlarging the parking area. This was timely work, as heavy summer rainfalls had washed out already weakened portions of the road and caused its closure just prior to commencement of the project.

<http://trondekheritage.com/our-places/forty-mile/>

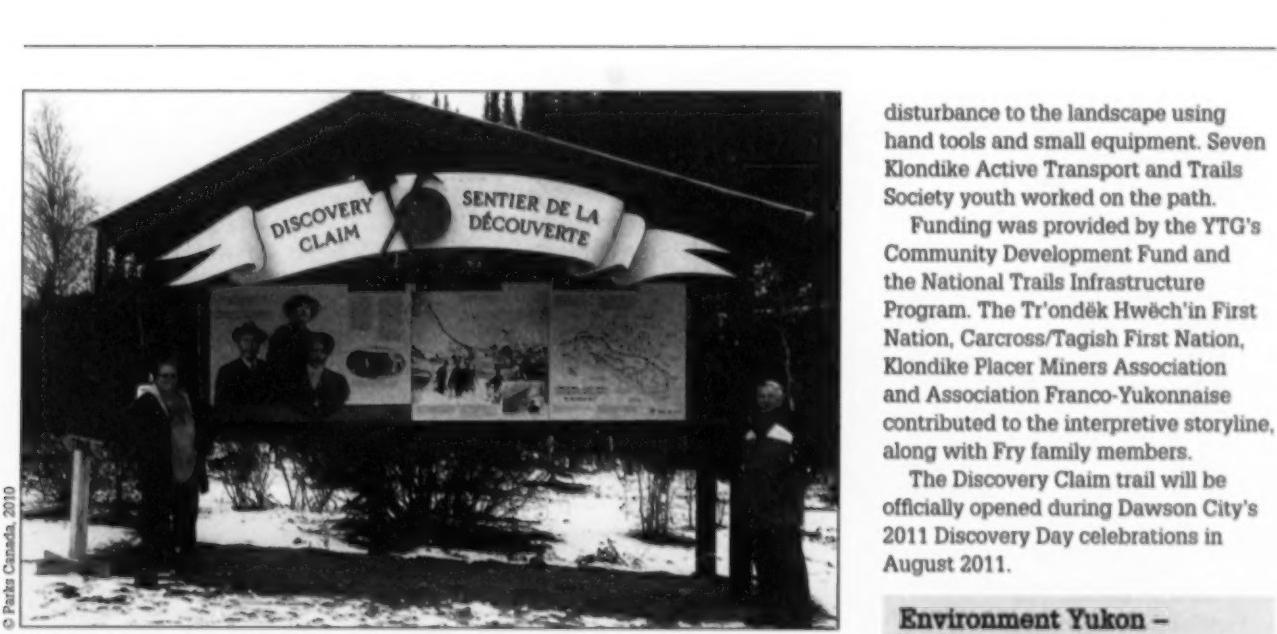
Herschel Island Territorial Park

Work started this past summer on upgrades to the Pacific Steam Whaling Co. Community House to extend its use in the spring and fall in support of scientific research and monitoring of parks resources. This work was funded by the CanNor's Community Adjustment Fund as part of the Government of Canada's Economic Action Plan. Besides being the interpretive centre for the park, the building is used for housing, work space and cooking/dining facilities for researchers in the off seasons.

A crew of local hires from Akalvik completed the exterior painting in 2010. Additional materials were purchased, shipped and stored for further work in 2011. When the upgrades are complete the building will have been raised, insulation added and general repairs made. Work was also completed on the foundations of three historic buildings that had been previously moved away from the shore of Pauline Cove due to increasing coastal erosion.

Herschel Island is increasingly becoming an important base for scientific research and climate change monitoring in the western Arctic. Planning is currently underway for a major, seven-year study of the threats of climate change to archaeological resources in the region.

<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Herschel/English/menu.html>



© Parks Canada, 2010

Officials from CDF and KCS at interpretive trail kiosk.

Klondike Gold Rush Discovery Claim

Discovery Claim on Bonanza Creek, near Dawson City, is the place where Skookum Jim Mason, George Carmack and Dawson Charlie discovered gold in 1896, leading to the famous Klondike Gold Rush. Part of the site is now a National Historic Site of Canada while another remains an active mining claim

donated by the late Mr. Art Fry to the Klondyke Centennial Society (KCS).

In 2010, KCS partnered with the YTG and Parks Canada to develop a 1.2 km interpretive walking trail at the site. The trail winds along Bonanza Creek, passing exhibits that explain early placer mining techniques and its gold mining history. The trail development work was achieved with minimal

disturbance to the landscape using hand tools and small equipment. Seven Klondike Active Transport and Trails Society youth worked on the path.

Funding was provided by the YTG's Community Development Fund and the National Trails Infrastructure Program. The Tr'ondëk Hwéch'in First Nation, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Klondike Placer Miners Association and Association Franco-Yukonnaise contributed to the interpretive storyline, along with Fry family members.

The Discovery Claim trail will be officially opened during Dawson City's 2011 Discovery Day celebrations in August 2011.

Environment Yukon – Parks and Conservation

Almost 12% of Yukon's land mass has been or is in the process of being protected for conservation purposes, whether as a park (national or territorial), special management area or habitat protection area. Four waterways have also been designated as Canadian Heritage Rivers. Progress was made in a few key areas over the course of 2010.



© Government of Yukon, 2010

The Summit Lake / Bell River area in North Yukon will be protected in the future, as called for in the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan.

Canadian Heritage Rivers

The Tatshenshini River, the Thirty-Mile section of the Yukon River, the Alsek River and the Bonnet Plume River are designated Canadian Heritage Rivers. Yukon Parks continued to monitor industrial use on the 'Tat', Bonnet Plume and Thirty-Mile throughout 2010 (e.g.: mineral exploration activities).

The Bonnet Plume River lies in the Peel River watershed and is remote even by Yukon standards. A public consultation on a recommended Land Use Plan for the watershed generated passionate responses in 2010. The planning partners – YTG, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwéch'in First Nation and Gwich'in Tribal Council – are now working toward a final version of the plan.

Special Management Areas

Many Yukon First Nation Final Agreements provide for the creation of Special Management Areas (SMA) to support the preservation of ecological values as well as traditional First Nation use. SMAs can acquire additional protection through designation as a Habitat Protection Area or Territorial Park, pursuant to the relevant territorial legislation.

Summit Lake - Bell River

The North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan, ratified in 2009, calls for a protected area in a pristine area that includes the lower Bell River and Summit Lake, by the Yukon-NWT border. The area includes a portion of the Porcupine caribou range and offers rich habitat for grizzlies, wolves and sheep.

The YTG will work with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in 2011 to determine the boundary for the protected area and what designation it should receive – Ecological Reserve, Wilderness Preserve, or Natural Environment Park.

Ta'tla Mun Special Management Area

Ta'tla Mun (formerly Tatlimain Lake) is an important food fish lake southeast of Pelly Crossing. It also has a reputation as a high quality fly-in sport fishing lake. A five-year review of the SMA Management Plan was completed in 2010. The 33.3 km² Ta'tla Mun SMA was established through the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement.

Parks

Environment Yukon manages four territorial parks: Tombstone, Herschel Island-Qikiqtaruk, Ni'iinlii' Njik (Fishing Branch) and Coal River Springs.

Yukon First Nation Final Agreements call for an additional three territorial parks to be established: Kusawa, Agay Mene, and Asi Keyi. Each must have a management plan in place prior to designation as a territorial park. Plans must consider natural and heritage resource protection, park management structures, and existing recreational use. The YTG is managing these park areas pending completion of the management plans.

Agay Mene Territorial Park

Management planning was suspended in May 2010. The 697 km² proposed park area includes Tarfu Lake and a large portion of the Snafu Lake chain south of Whitehorse. The Carcross / Tagish First Nation Final Agreement calls for this SMA to be protected as a park.

Kusawa Territorial Park

Management planning was suspended in September 2009. The 3,000 km² proposed park area, 70 km west of Whitehorse, features unusual biodiversity for a rugged mountain setting. The Final Agreements for the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Carcross / Tagish First Nation call for this SMA to be protected as a park.

Tombstone Territorial Park

The new Tombstone Interpretive Centre saw its first full year of operations in 2010, with more than 10,000 visitors through organized tours by Holland America and independent travelers. And judging by the many cups of tea served, visitors are staying longer to enjoy the stories of the area offered by Parks Interpreters.



More than 10,000 visitors passed through the doors of the new Tombstone Interpretive Centre during its first full season of operations in 2010.

Funding from the CanNor helped transform a former gravel pit into a xeriscaped parking lot for the interpretive centre, using innovative water swales and hardy local species. CanNor also funded the construction of a wheelchair-accessible interpretive trail to nearby beaver ponds.

Although it's just 222 km south of the Arctic Circle, the \$2 million interpretive centre building has a small carbon footprint because its design relies heavily on solar energy and natural air circulation for heating and ventilation.

The park management plan provides for employment and economic opportunities for Tr'ondëk Hwéch'in First Nation citizens and directs activities in the park. A public review of the plan will be undertaken in 2012.

Tombstone's 2,100 km² of diverse landscape and spectacular scenery make this a popular destination for hikers and other travelers. Backcountry campsites are available at Grizzly, Divide and Talus lakes, in addition to the 36-site territorial campground for road travelers.

Habitat Protection Areas

A Habitat Protection Area (HPA) is an area identified as requiring special protection under Yukon's *Wildlife Act*. HPAs can protect areas where a wildlife species is concentrated at certain times of year, a habitat type is rare in the Yukon, or a site is particularly fragile.

Five HPAs have been designated in Yukon to date, protecting about 495,000 hectares of exceptional habitat. Five more are planned: Ddhaw Ghro, Devil's Elbow / Big Island, Lewes Marsh, Pickhandle Lakes and Tagish Narrows. Most HPAs have been agreed to in First Nation Final Agreements.

Ddhaw Ghro

The Steering Committee released a draft Management Plan in 2008. Ddhaw Ghro's 1,608 km² will be formally designated an HPA once the three governments involved (Selkirk First Nation, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, and YTG) approve the management plan.

"Ddhaw Ghro" is the Northern Tutchone name for the area formerly known as McArthur Wildlife Sanctuary. Grey Hunter Peak dominates the landscape and the surrounding hillsides support a population of Fannin sheep, a unique colour variation of Dall's sheep. Important mineral licks, caribou winter range and other unique features are found in the area.

Devil's Elbow / Big Island

Final approval of the draft management plan is expected in 2011, to be followed by designation as an HPA. Representatives from the Mayo District Renewable Resources Council, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and YTG developed the plan.

This 75 km² area provides good habitat for waterfowl, fish, and a variety of other wildlife. Traditional and local knowledge also identified these two small sites along the Stewart River as important moose calving areas.

Pickhandle Lakes

The Pickhandle Lakes, located along the Alaska flyway, are an important waterfowl nesting and staging area that also support healthy populations of furbearers and moose. The Kluane First Nation Final Agreement called for an HPA here. It is anticipated that a steering committee of Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation and YTG members will begin the management planning process for the 51 km² HPA in 2011.

Tagish Narrows

Tagish Narrows is an important spring staging area for swans and other waterfowl, with open water in April and May when most northern lakes are still frozen. Steering committee members were nominated in 2010 by the Carcross / Tagish First Nation, federal and territorial governments. The committee will meet in 2011 to begin developing the management plan. The Carcross / Tagish Final Agreement sets out management objectives for this 4.5 km² area.

Tsäwnjik Chu (Nordenskiold) Wetland

The YTG designated this major wetland complex an HPA in 2010. The long, narrow 78.5 km² parcel lies along the Nordenskiold River, south of Carmacks and is the traditional "bread basket" for Little Salmon / Carmacks First Nation citizens. HPA designation recognizes the critical importance of this wetland complex to the First Nation and the diverse wildlife populations within it. The approved management plan respects the traditional and current use of the area while encouraging public appreciation for its wildlife.

Whitefish Wetlands

The North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan, ratified in 2009, recommended that the Whitefish Wetlands be designated an HPA. This area includes Vuntut Gwitchin settlement lands. The YTG and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will discuss the next steps in 2011.

For More Information

Additional information on the initiatives described in New Parks North can be obtained from the following offices:

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All of the agencies listed here have contributed to this publication. Our goal is to provide a single, annual publication of interest to everyone following northern natural and cultural heritage conservation issues in a convenient and economical medium. Your comments are welcome, addressed to the Editor at the National Parks, National Historic Sites and National Marine Conservations Areas address above.

